

Kashmir Convener



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Govt Allocates Districts To Cabinet Ministers

KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The five cabinet ministers of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday were allocated 20 districts of the Union Territory for better coordination, effective implementation of developmental programs, closer monitoring of public services, and other related matters of the respective districts.

According to an order, the ministers are hereby allocated the districts, as



indicated against each, for ensuring better coordination, effective implementation of developmental programs, closer monitoring of public services, and other related matters of the district(s).

Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Deputy Chief Minister, has been allocated the districts of Jammu, Poonch, Anantnag, and Shopian while Sakeena Masood (Itto), Minister for

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Handholding industry is our responsibility: CM Omar

● Pledges revival of Darbar Move



KC NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today reaffirmed his government's commitment to supporting local industries in overcoming the challenges they are currently facing.

Speaking at an event organized by the Jammu Chamber of Commerce & Industry (JCCI) at its office, the Chief Minister was felicitated for assuming office as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

The event was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, Minister of Forest, Ecology

and Environment Javed Ahmad Rana, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, JCCI President Arun Gupta, Vice President and General Secretary of JCCI, former presidents, and other members. Senior officials, including the Additional Chief Secretary to the CM, Principal Secretary Finance, Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce, and Director Industries & Commerce Jammu, were also present.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah acknowledged the persistent challenges faced by the industrial sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

"There is no shortage of issues. If I were to claim that these problems have only emerged in the past decade, it would be misleading. These challenges are not new, nor are they solely the result of Jammu and Kashmir's transition into a Union Territory. However, the UT transition has undoubtedly compounded these issues," he stated.

Highlighting the geographical constraints of the region, the Chief Minister said, "Several challenges stem from our location. Jammu and Kashmir is situated in a corner of the country. Our market is very small, and our raw material base is limited. An industry that relies on importing raw materials and exporting finished products cannot sustain itself without governmental support."

Reiterating his government's responsibility, he added, "When we hold your hand and provide support, it is not a reflection of your helplessness or weakness. It is our responsibility, and we will fulfill it." On the tourism potential of Jammu, the Chief Minister emphasized the untapped opportunities presented by the large number of pilgrims visiting the region. "Over a crore pilgrims visit Jammu for Mata Vaishno Devi every year. If we can successfully

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Govt Confirms Reduction In Duty On US apple imports

KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance, Pankaj Chaudhary Monday informed the Parliament that the import of apples currently attracts

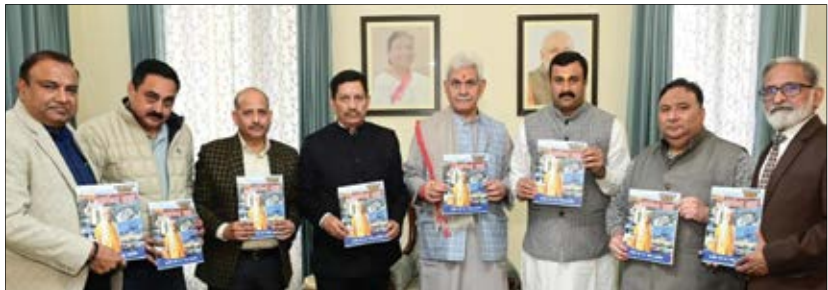


a customs duty of 50%, which is at par with the World Trade Organization (WTO) bound rate.

The statement came in response to a question raised in Parliament by Srinagar's member of Parliament Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, who inquired about the impact of reduced import duties on apple imports from the US, its implications for domestic apple farmers in Kashmir, and whether the

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J-K's Destiny Will Be Decided By Its Youth: LG Manoj Sinha



KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha today said that the destiny of Jammu and Kashmir will be decided by its youth, and all the arms of the government are committed to empower them.

The LG made these remarks while releasing the

3rd edition of "Kartavya Marg" annual in-house magazine published by Shri Kailash Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust, at Raj Bhawan Jammu today.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated and extended his best wishes to the editor and everyone associated with the publication. He appreciated the

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PDD Proposes Extra Power To Reduce Distress Power Cuts

Riyaz Bhat

SRINAGAR: With the growing demand of electricity after the onset of winters, the Power Development Department (PDD) has requested for more power to reduce the issues of distress and unscheduled power cuts across the Valley.

A top official informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the demand for power has increased significantly from the past two weeks and requires

extra electricity to overcome it.

"We are expecting some power from the authorities because we have demanded more power. Let's see what we get," the official said.

It also said, "The unrestricted demand of electricity including the ongoing power curtailment schedule has reached 2600-2700 Megawatts. However, as of now, we have only 1450 MWs of power." About the new



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Against allocated Rs 1000 cr, SSCL utilizes 75% funds

Mubashir Alam Wani

SRINAGAR: The much-hyped beautification projects by Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), which faced frequent criticism over planning and timing, are moving closer to its completion, with officials expressing confidence that the remaining projects were likely to be finished by early 2025.

According to the official details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that out of a total 142 projects, 123 have already been completed. The officials added that the completed projects have marked a significant progress in the transformation of the City's urban landscape.

As per the officials, with an estimated budget of Rs 1,000 crore, approximately 75% of the allocated funds have been utilized so far, with the remaining budget left for the remaining projects.

Among the completed projects, the officials highlighted revamped Polo View High Street, Clock Tower in the City Centre, and the landscaped Jhelum Riverfront Embankments.

Officials said that the refurbished prominent landmarks have enhanced the City's aesthetics and public spaces, adding that in addition to these projects, road resurfacing work has been

extensively undertaken in various parts of the City, improving travel comfort and road infrastructure.

Notably, the road-widening policy, aimed at expanding pedestrian pathways by reducing road space for vehicles, has drawn criticism



from residents. Many have voiced concerns about traffic congestion caused by the reduced carriageway width.

Defending the policy, the SSCL officials stated, "The designs were meticulously planned with input from subject matter experts and are aligned with legitimate practices to create sustainable, pedestrian-friendly urban spaces."

Pertinently, Srinagar Smart City projects have missed several deadlines on project completions in the past, while

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GMC Sgr Students Protest Over Reduced Open Merit Seats

KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, December 9: Medical students from Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar have raised serious concerns over the drastic reduction in Open Merit (OM) seats in postgraduate admissions under the NEET PG framework.

The students claim that recent policy

changes, including the implementation of SO 176 (March 15, 2024) and SO 305 (May 21, 2024), have severely impacted merit-based admissions, leading to widespread discontent among aspiring doctors.

According to the students, the open merit quota, which previously accounted

for 75% of PG seats under SRO 49 of 2018, has been reduced to approximately 27% after the application of new reservation rules and Rule 17 of the J&K Reservation Rules (2004-2005). Out of 293 total PG seats available in government

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Will Not Let Rohingyas Starve Or Die Of Cold: CM Omar



Syed Raja Rather

SRINAGAR: The Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday clarified that the issue of Rohingya refugees is a humanitarian one and they must not be treated like animals; they are human beings and must be treated as such.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer

(KNO), the Chief Minister while speaking to the reporters when asked about the restoration of the water supplies to the Rohingya refugees taking shelter in Jammu, said that his government cannot allow the refugees to starve or let them die of cold.

Last week, the water and power connections of many such

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BJP seeks CBI Probe into Rohingya settlement in Jammu

KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday alleged that the settlement of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis in Jammu city is a part of a major "conspiracy" and demanded a thorough investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The party's Jammu and Kashmir chief spokesperson, Advocate Sunil Sethi, urged the Lieutenant Governor to initiate a CBI probe and file an FIR to investigate the individuals or groups responsible for facilitating the settlement of these refugees in the region.

Sethi stated that the settlement of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis in Jammu began around the same time that militancy took root in the region in the 1990s, suggesting a

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ACB Registers 444 Cases In 5 Years

● Kashmir tops with 275 cases, Jammu records only 169

Jahangir Sofi

SRINAGAR: In a bid to eliminate corruption from Jammu and Kashmir, the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has registered over 440 cases across the Union Territory in the last five years, indicating a strict response by the government against such practices.

Over the past five years, the ACB has registered a staggering 444 FIRs in different alleged corruption cases, exposing the persistent grip of corruption across Jammu and Kashmir.

From Kashmir's bustling Srinagar to the administrative heart of Jammu, the data tells a story of vigilance, challenges, and the relentless pursuit of accountability.

According to the official breakdown of First Information Reports (FIRs) data, also available with the news agency—Kashmir News

Observer (KNO), Kashmir province has recorded 275 cases, significantly outpacing Jammu province's 169 FIRs during this period.

The year 2022 witnessed

Station followed with 20 FIRs in 2024.

As per the official breakdown data, a total of 71 FIRs were registered in the region in 2020 with Kashmir



the highest number of FIRs, with 128 cases, including 88 cases from Kashmir province—the highest single-year tally for the region in the last five years.

In 2022, the Srinagar ACB Police Station registered 40 FIRs, the highest for any single station, Jammu's Central Police

province recording 38 while Jammu province closely chasing at 33 FIRs.

Similarly, 2021 witnessed a surge from previous year as J&K recorded 94 FIRs in different alleged corruption cases, with Kashmir

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Govt Orders Major Reshuffle in Civil Administration

G.N. Itoo Appointed as
Director of School Education;
Syed Shahnawaz Bukhari
Joint Director Information

KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Monday ordered a significant reshuffle in the civil administration, transferring 19 officers.

As per the Government Order No.2059-JK(GAD) of 2024, Dated:09.12.2024 available with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Mehmood Ahmad Shah, Director of Handloom and Handicrafts, Kashmir, has been appointed as the Managing Director of Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited. Nisar Ahmad Wani, who was awaiting adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as a Member of the J&K Special Tribunal (Srinagar Bench).

Furthermore, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Itoo, Mission Director of Jal Jeevan Mission, has been appointed as Director

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Rahul Takes Dig At PM, Adani With Mock ‘Interview’ In Parliament Premises

NEW DELHI: Leaders of some INDIA bloc parties on Monday protested in Parliament complex over the Adani row, with Rahul Gandhi conducting a mock ‘interview’ over the issue with Congress members wearing masks of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and industrialist Gautam Adani

Standing outside the Makar Dwar of Parliament, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge along with MPs of other opposition parties raised slogans of “Modi, Adani ek hain” and “we want justice”.

After sloganeering, Rahul Gandhi conducted the mock ‘interview’ with Congress leaders wearing masks of Modi and Adani.

Gandhi asked the party member sporting mask of Adani why Parliament was not being allowed to function to which the Congress MP (posing as Adani) said “we’ll have to ask Amit bhai... that man is missing”.

Asked by Gandhi about the relationship between the two, the Congress MP said, “We are



together”.

The Congress leaders sporting mask of Adani also said, “He does whatever I say and want... be it airport or anything else.”

On why Modi was silent, the Congress MP posing as Adani said, “this man is in tension these days”, evoking laughter around. Asked what was his next plan and what he proposed to buy now, the Congress MP wearing

the Adani mask said, “we have not decided yet. We have a meeting this evening.”

and demanded a discussion and a probe into the Adani Group.

The protest took place in front of the steps of Parliament’s Makar Dwar and not on the steps leading to it following an advisory by the Lok Sabha Secretariat not to protest on the steps.

The opposition protests on the Adani issue have been taking place inside Parliament complex ever since the start of the winter session.

The Congress and some other opposition parties have been demanding a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) probe following the indictment of Adani and other company officials in a US court.

The Congress has said Adani’s indictment “vindicates” its demand for a JPC probe into the various “scams” involving the billionaire industrialist’s conglomerate. Rahul Gandhi has sought Adani’s immediate arrest.

The Adani Group has dismissed all allegations as “baseless”.

The Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party and Aam Aadmi Party were not part of the protest.

However, Samajwadi Party leader Ram Gopal Yadav said nothing much should be read into the absence of some leaders and asserted “all is well” in the opposition bloc.

MPs of the Left, DMK, Shiv Sena (UBT), RJD and NCP were among those who raised slogans

Himachal Receives Season’s First Snowfall, 87 Roads Closed

SHIMLA: Himachal Pradesh witnessed its first snowfall of the season which led to the



several high mountain passes, received the first snowfall of the season on Sunday evening,

with minimum temperatures ranging from 12 to 18 degrees below freezing. Tabo recorded a low of minus 12.3 degrees Celsius.

Since Sunday evening, about 800 people stranded in 490 vehicles in Lahaul due to the snowfall have been rescued, according to the Lahaul and Spiti police. Snow and slippery road conditions also disrupted vehicular traffic on several roads in the upper Shimla region.

Despite the adverse weather, schools in Shimla remained open due to ongoing exams, and the supply of essential goods was also not affected.

Koksar recorded 6.7 cm of snow, followed by Khadrula with 5 cm, Sangla with 3.6 cm, Keylong with 3 cm, and Nichar and Shimla both with 2.5 cm.

The lower hills of the state saw light rainfall, with Kandaghat, Kasauli, Jubbarhatti and Mandi recording 2.2 mm, 2 mm, 1.9 mm, and 1.4 mm of rain, respectively. Intense cold wave conditions persisted, with temperatures staying two to six degrees below freezing at several locations.

breaking a ten-week dry spell and bringing cheer to the farmers, apple growers and hoteliers.

Shimla received 2.5 cm of snow, and areas like The Ridge, Mall Road and Jakhoo Peak were covered in a light blanket of snow. Snowfall was also recorded in key tourist destinations such as Manali, Kasauli, and Chail.

High-altitude areas and mountain passes were blanketed in snow, causing minimum temperatures to drop by four to six degrees.

The high-altitude tribal areas experienced piercing cold,

closure of at least 87 roads in the state, including Atari-Leh National Highway 3 near Manali’s Rohtang Pass, the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) said.

A total of 58 roads were closed in Shimla, followed by 17 in Kinnaur, six in Kangra, two in Lahaul and Spiti, one each in Kullu and Chamba districts. Some parts of Himachal suffered power outages as 457 transformers were disrupted, the SEOC said.

Shimla, along with the nearby tourist resorts of Kufri, Fagu, Chansel, Narkanda and the Churdhar ranges, as well as

Sheena Bora case SC notice to CBI on Indrani Mukerjea’s plea to travel abroad

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday sought the CBI’s response on former media executive Indrani Mukerjea’s plea challenging a Bombay High Court ruling denying her to travel abroad as she is accused of killing her daughter Sheena Bora.

The travel restriction matter came up to the Supreme Court after a special court on July 19 allowed Mukerjea’s plea to visit Spain and the United Kingdom for 10 days over the next three months.

The CBI approached the high court challenging the order passed by the special court. The high court quashed the special court’s order on September 27. Mukerjea moved the apex court challenging this high court order.

A bench of justices M M Sundresh and Aravind Kumar issued a notice to the agency and sought its response on the appeal filed by Mukerjea against the high court order. In her plea filed through advocate Sana Raees Khan, Mukerjea said she was a British citizen as she sought permission to visit Spain



and her home country for “making necessary changes and amendments and taking care of pending work which cannot be transacted without her personal presence”. She argued the activation of a digital certificate was a must for all relevant work and administration in Spain and her physical presence was mandatory. In its verdict, the high court noted Mukerjea wanted to travel abroad on the ground that she was a British national and was required to execute documents regarding her bank account and perform other work in Spain and the UK.

CUET-UG, PG Set To Undergo Changes In 2025, Revised Norms To Be Announced Soon: UGC Chief

NEW DELHI: The Common University Entrance Test (CUET) for admission to undergraduate and

postgraduate courses is set to undergo several changes in the 2025 edition following a review by an expert panel, according to UGC Chairman Jagadish Kumar.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) had constituted an expert committee to review the conduct of CUET-UG and PG.

“Based on feedback from past years, it is also essential to continuously improve the examination process to provide a better, more efficient and conducive environment for students taking CUET.

In this spirit, the UGC has constituted an expert committee to review the conduct of CUET-UG and CUET-PG for 2025,” Mr. Kumar said.

“The committee has examined various aspects of the test, such as its structure, number of papers, duration of test papers, syllabus alignment and operational logistics. The commission considered these recommendations in a recent meeting,” he added.

The UGC chief informed that the commission will soon release a draft proposal detailing the

revised guidelines for conducting CUET-UG and CUET-PG 2025, inviting feedback and suggestions from students, parents, teachers and institutions.

In the first edition of the exam in 2022, CUET-UG was plagued by technical glitches. Also, as a result of tests for a subject being conducted over multiple shifts, the scores had to be normalised during the announcement of results. The exam was conducted in hybrid mode for the first time in 2024. It was cancelled across Delhi a night before it was to be held citing logistical reasons.



SC dismisses plea to clear road blockade caused by farmers’ protest

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea seeking directions to the Centre and other authorities to immediately clear blockades on national and state highways in Punjab where farmers are staging protests.

A bench of justices Surya Kant and Manmohan said the matter is already pending before the court and it cannot entertain repetitive petitions on the same issue. “We are already examining the larger issue. You are not the only conscience keeper of society. Don’t file repetitive petitions. Some are filing for publicity interest and some are filing to play to the gallery. We cannot entertain repetitive petitions on the same issue,” the bench

told petitioner Gaurav Luthra, who claimed to be a social activist in Punjab. The court also refused Luthra’s request to tag the petition with the pending matter. Farmers under the banner of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha have been camping at Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 after their march to Delhi was stopped by security forces. The plea has alleged that farmers’ and their unions have blocked the entire national and state highways in Punjab for an indefinite period. It sought directions to ensure that national highways and railway tracks are not blocked by the agitating farmers.

Bomb Threat Mail To Around 40 Delhi Schools, Sender Demands USD 30,000

NEW DELHI: Around 40 schools in Delhi received a bomb threat mail Monday morning with the sender demanding USD 30,000, a police official said.

The threat was sent in a single e-mail marked to the city’s prominent schools including DPS RK Puram; GD Goenka, Paschim Vihar; The British School, Chanakyapuri; The Mother’s International, Aurobindo Marg; Modern School, Mandi House; DPS Vasant Kunj; Delhi Police Public School, Safdarjung; DPS East of Kailash and Salwan Public Schools.

Most schools that received the threat suspended their classes and sent students back home as officials said.

A Delhi Fire Service official said they received the first alerts about the bomb threats from DPS RK Puram and GD Goenka Paschim Vihar.

He said bomb detection teams, fire officials, local police and dog squads responded immediately and conducted searches at the schools.

Nothing suspicious has been found yet, a police official said around 9.30 am.

He said said further operations are underway.

Sources said the email was delivered on the schools’ id at 11.38

pm Sunday when the schools were closed from scottielanza@gmail.com.

“I planted multiple bombs inside the building. The bombs are small and



hidden very well. It will not cause very much damage to the building, but many people will be injured when the bombs detonate,” the email read.

It also said, “You all deserve to suffer and lose limbs. If I do not receive 30,000 dollar. The group =E2=80=9CKNR=E2=80=9D is behind this attack,” it reads.

In a message to parents, Mother Mary’s School, Mayur Vihar, said, “An email was received this morning regarding a bomb threat in school. As such, the students are being dispersed

immediately as a precautionary measure. You are requested to kindly collect your wards from your respective bus stops.

While taking his daughter back from the school, Harish, one of the parents, told PTI Videos, “I received a message about emergency from the school. This is the failure of the government as the schools are getting such threats regularly.”

In May, more than 200 schools, hospitals and other important government installations in the city received a similar kind of bomb threat but the case is yet to be solved as the mail was sent using Virtual Private Network.

Rajya Sabha Witnesses Multiple Adjournments Amid Uproar Over Cong-Soros ‘Links’

NEW DELHI: Rajya Sabha proceedings were disrupted on Monday as the treasury benches accused top Congress leaders of colluding with billionaire investor George Soros to destabilise the country, triggering protests from opposition members.

The Upper House witnessed three adjournments, including two during the pre-lunch session.

Soon after the House assembled for the day, it witnessed uproarious scenes with members of treasury benches on their feet, raising slogans and demanding answers from the Congress over reports of alleged links of some of its top leaders with Soros, who they accused of conspiring to destabilise the country and its economy.

Soon after a brief first adjournment during Zero Hour, Leader of the House J P Nadda said BJP members were agitated over an issue that involved Congress leaders and wanted a discussion.

“The link between Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia-Pacific (FDL-AP) and George Soros is a matter of concern. Its co-president is a member of this House,” he said.

Nadda alleged the FDL-AP sees Jammu and

Kashmir as a “separate entity” and gets financial support from the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. Jammu tourism packages Jammu and Kashmir real estate

As Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar sought to know why the ruling party members were protesting, many BJP MPs alleged that the top Congress leadership has links with Soros. They demanded that the issue be discussed in the House as it is connected to national security.

Several MPs of the BJP and NDA allies raised the issue and demanded an immediate discussion on it while Congress members claimed this was being done to divert attention from the Adani issue.

Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Mallikarjun Kharge and other Congress leaders like Jairam Ramesh and Pramod Tiwari asked how the chairman was allowing the ruling party members to raise the issue when he had rejected their notices in this regard.

“It is wrong to raise the issue like this and damage the image of a member, who is not in the House,” Kharge said.

He also read out rules whereby any member cannot raise such an issue against another member, following which the chairman asked which member



he was referring to.

“We did not expect this from you,” Congress’ Digvijaya Singh told the Chair.

Congress’ Pramod Tiwari alleged the ruling party MPs were siding with Adani and disturbing

the House for him.

“The BJP is doing all this to protect Adani,” he said. BJP MP Sudhanshu Trivedi said if the LoP was

referring to another member, it becomes clear that the reports of involvement of a member are true, as

the ruling party has not named anyone.

BJP’s Radha Mohan Das Aggarwal said party MPs have not named any party and will speak during the discussion on how Congress leaders are colluding with elements of “deep state” and Soros to destabilise the country and break it into pieces.

“We want a discussion on this serious issue as they want to create instability in the country. These anti-nationals should be exposed before the country. Terror and anti-national activities are being carried out in the country at the behest of such forces and they should be exposed,” he said.

The Congress, he claimed, was seen standing with such forces as it supported agitations in the country.

On the BJP’s allegations about former Congress president Sonia Gandhi’s links to an organisation financed by Soros, party MP Ghanashyam Tiwari said it is very bad for the country and its unity.

“We want that there should be a discussion on the issue as it is linked to the issue of national security,” he said.

Brij Lal of the BJP alleged Rahul Gandhi’s trips abroad are funded by Soros.

Literary Forum Bandipora Finalizes Arrangements for Poet Parsa Rouf Gayal's Book Release

Young Poet, Scholar Dr. Adil Mohiuddin Welcomed into LFB; Members Hope for Fresh Impetus to Literary Activities

BANDIPORA: The Literary Forum Bandipora on Sunday convened an important meeting to finalise the arrangements for the Book Release Function of Poet Parsa Rouf Gayal to be held on December 14th besides reviewing arrangements for Youm-e-Nazki.

The meeting was held at the Camp Office of Kashmir Convener at Rahimya Road Bandipora and was chaired by Patron Mubashir Saleem Nazki. While Acting President Showkat Sufi besides other senior members of the forum were also present on the occasion. Mansoor Muntazir conducted the proceedings of the meeting.

The members discussed threadbare the arrangements put in place to organ-



ise the Book release function on December 14 at Govt Girls Higher Secondary School Plan Bandipora. Three Books authored by Parsa Rouf Gayal including Shah-kaarte Meraj Gov, Waslech Aash and Teyoth Moudurr will be released during the function.

It was given out in the meeting that four scholarly Book reviews and papers will be presented by Shahbaaz Hakbari, Dr Ali Moham-

mad Nishtar, Mir Tariq and Basharat Faulkri. A special Poetic Session (Mehfil-e-Mushaira) will also be held on the occasion.

During the meeting the members also reviewed the arrangements for the celebration of Youm-e-Nazki on January 05 to commemorate the death anniversary of Founder Adbi Markaz Kamraz and LFB.

During the meeting, several committees of experts were formed that shall nominate literary figures for the Nazki Award and Charag-e-Sokhan Award to be given away by Literary Forum Bandipora. The meeting concluded with the formal induction of young poet and research scholar Dr. Adil Mohiuddin into the Literary Forum. Members hoped that his entry in the forum would give a new

impetus to the forum to work with extra zeal for the popularity and upliftment of the Kashmir language.

The forum reiterated its commitment to fostering literary excellence and preserving the rich cultural heritage of Kashmiri language and literature.

Addressing the gathering, Mubashir Saleem Nazki highlighted the forum's commitment to fostering literary pursuits among the younger generation.

"The Literary Forum has been a guiding light for emerging writers while preserving Kashmir's literary heritage. It is imperative for educational institutions to actively contribute to nurturing literary talent," he said.

MLA Nizamuddin Bhat Assures Uninterrupted Operations for Rural BPO

Bandipora: MLA Bandipora, Nizamuddin Bhat, has assured that the Rural Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) unit operating in the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora, will continue its operations without any interruptions. This assurance follows reports suggesting a possible closure of the facility, which employs around 200 local youth.

An Official Spokesperson said while addressing the concerns, Bhat engaged directly with the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora and other officials. The DC termed the reports baseless and confirmed that the designated space for the BPO remains allocated, ensuring its smooth functioning.

"This BPO is a cornerstone for employment generation in our district. Its uninterrupted operations are vital for the livelihood of many families and the district's economic growth," Mr. Bhat stated.

The Rural BPO, launched as a flagship initiative in Bandipora, has significantly contributed to job creation and local economic development. MLA Bhat's intervention has brought relief to the employees and stakeholders, reaffirming the government's commitment to supporting such initiatives.

Govt College for Women, M. A. Road Observes Anti-Corruption Day

Srinagar: Government College for Women, M. A. Road, Srinagar hosted an awareness programme to mark the International Anti-Corruption Day on Monday (December 09).

The event was organized by the Anti-Corruption Bureau J&K in collaboration with the NSS and Debating Committee of the host college.

The programme aimed at educating students and faculty about the scourge of corruption and the importance of ethical conduct in the society. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and teachers alike.

Mr. Suhail Rasool, Inspector ACB Srinagar, presented the concept note about the programme followed by a formal welcome address by the Principal of the host college, Dr. Yasmeen Farooq.

In her address, Dr. Yasmeen emphasized the role of youth in eradicating corruption. "Corruption is a social evil that undermines development and trust. It is imperative for students to lead the fight against it by adhering to integrity and transparency in their lives," she said.

Executive Engineer from ACB, Mr. Aijaz Masood delivered an insightful talk on corruption, highlighting various forms of corruption, its impact on governance and strategies to combat it.

A speech competition was also held on the theme 'Nature and Type of Corruption We See Around Us' in which students of the college participated. Sara Kaul (5th Semester) bagged the 1st position while Ms. Hibasha and Ms. Hurmut secured 2nd and 3rd positions respectively.

Prof. Mudasir Nazar from the Political Science department deliberated upon various crude forms of corruption which go around us anonymously. He also highlighted the efforts needed to address the problem.

The programme concluded with the Vote of Thanks presented by Dr. Saduf Nisar (NSS PO). Prof. Mehbooba Bano, HOD Political Science and Dr. Abina Habib from Department of English were the jury members for the debate competition while Mr. Shabeer Ahmad Parey conducted the proceedings of the event.

Airtel Identifies 8 Billion Spam Calls in Just 2.5 Months

Srinagar: Bharti Airtel, India's first spam-fighting network, has flagged a staggering 8 billion spam calls and 0.8 billion spam SMSes within two and a half months of launching its AI-powered spam detection system.

An official spokesperson said this advanced technology has successfully identified nearly 1 million spammers daily, alerting close to 252 million unique customers and contributing to a 12% decline in customers answering spam calls.

According to the report, 6% of all calls on the Airtel network and 2% of SMSes were identified as spam. Alarmingly, 35% of spammers used landline telephones to target users. Delhi customers received the highest number of spam calls, followed by those in Andhra Pradesh and Western Uttar Pradesh. Similarly, the majority of spam calls originated from Delhi, Mumbai, and Karnataka.

In the case of SMSes, Gujarat topped the list of spam origins, followed by Kolkata and Uttar Pradesh, while Mumbai, Chennai, and Gujarat were the most targeted regions.

The analysis highlights that 76% of spam calls targeted male customers. Age-wise, individuals aged 36-60 received 48% of spam calls, making them the most targeted group, followed by the 26-35 age bracket, which accounted for 26%. Only 8% of spam calls were directed at senior citizens. Additionally, smartphones priced between 15,000 and 20,000 received 22% of all spam calls.

Spam activity follows a daily pattern, starting at 9 am and peaking between 12 pm and 3 pm. Interestingly, spam calls decrease significantly by around 40% on Sundays.

This AI-driven initiative underscores Airtel's commitment to tackling the growing menace of spam. As India's first comprehensive spam-fighting network, Airtel continues to set new benchmarks in customer security, prioritizing privacy and convenience for its users.



HKM College organises farewell ceremony for outgoing Principal Prof.(Dr.) Tariq Hussain Bhat

Bandipora: HKM Government Degree College Bandipora organized a farewell ceremony to bid adieu to the Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Tariq Hussain Bhat, on his transfer to

In his farewell address, the Principal reflected on his tenure at the college, expressing gratitude for the commitment and cooperation of the teaching and non-teach-



Gandhi Memorial College Srinagar.

The event was attended by the teaching and non-teaching staff, who gathered to honour his significant contributions to the institution.

The programme began with several faculty members sharing their thoughts and experiences of working under the leadership of Prof. (Dr.) Tariq Hussain Bhat.

Senior faculty member and HoD Botany, Dr. Iqbal Hussain Qadri, appreciated his amiable and amicable nature and credited him for fostering a cordial and inclusive atmosphere in the college. Another senior faculty member, Dr. Mohd. Sheikhul Ashraf, lauded his impactful administrative decisions and his exceptional care and support for the Local Fund Employees.

ing staff. He shared valuable suggestions on efficiently managing an institution and encouraged the staff to continue working with dedication and unity.

As a mark of respect and appreciation, Prof. (Dr.) Tariq Hussain Bhat was honoured with a shawl, souvenirs, and gifts presented by the teaching and non-teaching staff.

The program was skillfully managed by Dr. Sajad Manzoor, HoD Political Science, while Prof. G. M. Khan from the Department of English served as the rapporteur. Prof. Sadaf, faculty in the English Department, presented a brief vote of thanks. The ceremony concluded on a warm and emotional note, with everyone wishing the outgoing Principal success and happiness in his future endeavours.

GMC Handwara organizes valedictory function of cultural festival -Synapse 24

KUPWARA: Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara today organized the valedictory function of the week long Cultural festival titled Syn-



apse-24 to mark the celebration of its establishment.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan was chief guest at the function.

The event also witnessed the participation of various dignitaries includ-

ing Chairman DDC Kupwara, Irfan Sultan Pandithpori; SSP Handwara, Mushtaq Ahmed Choudhary; Prof. Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Chalkoo and Prof. Dr.

Sheikh Mushtaq of GMC Srinagar; DDCs of Mawar, Rajwar and Drugmulla.

Faculty of GMC, staff, besides, students in large number were present at the event.

The event was organised under the chairmanship of Principal GMC Hand-

wara, Prof. Dr. Khurshid Ahmed Wani.

Addressing the function, the DC said it is a big achievement that the GMC Handwara has presently the strength of 200 students, which was a dream a few years back.

While congratulating all the stakeholders for their active support in the successful establishment of the Medical College, she said that the public service delivery will improve at the District Hospital as well as the quality education will take great leaps in the future.

She appreciated the College students for conducting the programme in a well organized manner and said that it is the huge testament of the spirit of this institution and hoped that it will continue to grow in future.

The function, which was the first ever event of its kind, saw vibrant participation of students and artists who presented diverse performances in multilingual mode including poetry, dance, songs, drama, gazals, mushaira and skits highlighting the richness of local culture and traditions.

During the event, the winners of the events were also felicitated by the dignitaries.

KVIB Organizes Awareness Camp For Unemployed Youth & Aspiring Entrepreneurs In Sopore

BARAMULLA: An awareness camp cum interaction program aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and empowering unemployed youth and artisans was today organized by the Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB) at Dakbanglow Sopore.

The camp was presided over by Chairperson of KVIB J&K, Dr. Hina Bhat.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from aspiring entrepreneurs, artisans, and a significant number of women, who showcased their unique talents and crafts.

The Chairperson KVIB was impressed by the exceptional craftsmanship displayed by the artisans. She praised their intricate handwork and acknowledged the vital role they play in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the region.

Dr. Hina assured the artisans that KVIB would take active steps to address their concerns and provide platforms for showcasing their talent to a broader audience. She said, "Your talent is invaluable, and KVIB is here to ensure that your hard work receives the recognition and support it deserves."

During the event, participants highlighted several challenges they face, particularly regarding market access and financial assistance. Artisans shared their difficulties in selling their products directly to consumers due to the involvement of intermediaries, which significantly reduces their earnings. Additionally, they raised concerns over delays in bank loan disbursements and the stringent requirements for guarantees, which often hinder their ability to access financial aid.

In response, Dr. Hina Bhat directed the Lead District Manager (LDM) to streamline the loan disbursement process and ensure it becomes more accessible to aspiring

entrepreneurs. She emphasized that KVIB is dedicated to simplifying procedures and removing barriers that limit the growth of local talent.

She also encouraged artisans to leverage KVIB-supported platforms such as e-commerce channels and exhibitions to connect directly with consumers and maximize their profits.



The Chairperson also emphasized the importance of empowering women and youth through skill development, financial assistance, and marketing support. She reassured participants that KVIB is committed to creating a supportive ecosystem that benefits artisans and contributes to the local economy.

Chairperson KVIB, in the presence of ADC Sopore, distributed certificates and registration cards to artisans and aspiring entrepreneurs during the camp.

Earlier, various speakers at the event detailed the government's welfare schemes under KVIB. These initiatives, including financial aid, skill-building programs, and market linkage support, are designed to promote self-employment and empower artisans and entrepreneurs across the region.

Dr. Hina emphasized that plans were underway to establish clusters and individual units to empower women further. She also highlighted the success of the past three years, stating that 3500 units had been set up in Baramulla with an investment of Rs.104.85 crores as subsidy, benefiting around 28,000 people.

Among others, the camp was attended by Secretary KVIB, ADC Sopore, Lead District Manager, representatives of different banks besides Artisans, different NGOs and societies.

Brigadier Usman SPPR Inter District/Tehsil Cricket Tournament Kicks Off

NAUSHERA: The Indian Army has launched the inaugural Brigadier Usman SPPR Inter District/Tehsil Cricket Tournament 2024-25, a landmark sporting event



in the South Pir Panjal Region.

The tournament, featuring teams from eight districts—Rajouri, Naushera, Akhnoor, Poonch, Doda, Reasi, Udhampur, and Sunderbani—is set to be an exciting contest. Teams are divided into two groups of four, with matches following a league-cum-knockout format. The final match is scheduled for December 19, 2024.

The opening ceremony saw the unveiling of the coveted trophy, marking the

formal commencement of the tournament. Players will have the chance to showcase their skills and sportsmanship, with top performers potentially advancing to state and national levels.

This annual tournament commemorates the valor and sacrifice of Brigadier Usman, the "Lion of Naushera," who laid down his life defending the nation during the 1947 Indo-Pak War. The event celebrates his legacy while fostering sportsmanship and unity among participants.

The league promises to be a mega event in the region's cricket history, providing a platform for budding talent and strengthening community bonds.

Empower Marginalized Communities

The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) and the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote entrepreneurship among marginalized communities. Under this partnership, NMDFC will offer concessional credit to entrepreneurs identified by DICC, while also facilitating awareness programs and advocating for policy reforms to ensure sustainable business practices. The ambitious plan of creating job creators rather than job seekers is commendable. It encourages self-reliance, ensures economic independence, and fosters a spirit of entrepreneurship that can serve as an inspiration for many. In addition, this collaboration between NMDFC and DICC signifies a broader effort to create an ecosystem that supports business development from the ground up, ensuring that marginalized sections of society can thrive in the business world. However, while this initiative shows promise, there are certain challenges that need to be addressed for its success. For one, the bureaucratic hurdles often associated with accessing concessional loans and credit can be a significant barrier for entrepreneurs from marginalized communities. In many cases, these entrepreneurs may lack the necessary financial literacy or documentation to navigate the system. Moreover, while credit is a crucial tool, access to affordable technology, skill development, and infrastructure support remains a pressing issue. The solution lies in a multi-pronged approach that not only offers financial support but also enhances financial literacy, provides technical training, and fosters innovation. There is a need for localized training programs that empower aspiring entrepreneurs with the skills to manage and scale their businesses. Additionally, ensuring that these entrepreneurs have access to affordable technology and infrastructure will go a long way in making their ventures sustainable. Addressing these challenges through a comprehensive support system will help create a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem for marginalized communities. With financial education, access to modern tools, and capacity-building programs, this collaboration can truly uplift communities and drive inclusive growth. By fostering an environment that nurtures entrepreneurial talent, the goal of self-reliance and socio-economic empowerment for marginalized sections can become a reality.

How Form and Substance Shape Our Existence



SHABEER AHMAD LONE

The relationship between form and substance lies at the heart of many philosophical, religious, and spiritual traditions, offering a profound lens through which we can explore the nature of existence and our place within it. Historically, these two elements have often been seen as dichotomous—form as the external, observable world of rituals, practices, and structures, and substance as the inner, unseen essence of thought, consciousness, and spirit. However, a more enlightened perspective encourages us to reconsider this separation, suggesting that form and substance are not opposing forces but rather supplementary complementary and reconciliatory dimensions of human experience. This dynamic interaction calls for a re-understanding of how outward practices can be deeply intertwined with inner truths, and how the external world, far from being a mere shadow of reality, is a vital expression of the deeper spiritual and philosophical essence that shapes our existence. By delving into this interplay, we find that the external world of form is not only a reflection of substance but also an essential channel through which we can engage with the profound mysteries of life, spirituality, and meaning. In world sacred scriptures, the interplay between form and substance is emphasized as essential to true spiritual practice. The Bible highlights the need for sincerity in worship, as in Isaiah 29:13, where outward rituals are criticized without heartfelt devotion. The Quran, in Al-Baqarah 2:177, teaches that righteousness is not in outward rituals but in inner faith and charitable acts: "It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is your piety that reaches Him" (Quran 22:37). The Bhagavad Gita (9:22) reveals that true devotion comes from a sincere heart, not external acts alone. Buddhism, in the Dhammapada (183), underscores that wisdom, not outward appearance, defines purity. The Tao Te Ching stresses that understanding comes from inner realization, not external knowledge (47). Zohar 1:19b: "The Torah is the lamp that illuminates the heart. Without the heart, there is no illumination; the inner light is that which brings understanding." These scriptures collectively emphasize that external forms, when disconnected from inner substance, fall short of true spiritual realization. In Western philosophy, Plato and Aristotle laid the foundation for discussions of form and substance. Plato's theory of forms, where the material world is an imperfect reflection of a higher, eternal realm, finds resonance in Rumi's mystical conception of the world. Rumi, like Plato, spoke of the material world as a reflection of a higher reality, where the soul seeks to transcend the external to reunite with the divine. For Rumi, the dervish's whirling form, for instance, was not simply an external practice but a manifestation of a deeper, internal state of spiritual ecstasy and transformation. Iqbal, too, emphasized this synthesis in his notion of selfhood, where individual realization moves from external practice to a profound, inward truth, a journey mirrored in his poetry's call for spiritual and intellectual awakening. His concept of the "Khudi" (selfhood) seeks to integrate the form of individual existence with the substance of higher consciousness. In Islamic mysticism, particularly in Sufism, the external forms of worship—such as prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage—are seen as symbolic pathways to deeper, more intimate experiences of the divine. Hafiz, one of the most celebrated Sufi poets, exemplifies this understanding in his work. For Hafiz, the forms of religious practice are not ends in themselves but serve to awaken

the soul to its deeper essence, allowing one to experience the divine in a personal and intimate way. His poetry often emphasizes the mystery of the unseen, suggesting that the external forms of devotion are just veils, behind which lie the deeper, ineffable truths of divine love and unity. This resonates deeply with the works of Ibn Arabi, whose mysticism emphasized that the external world and rituals are but expressions of an infinite divine reality. In the same tradition, Bedil and Jami echoed similar themes of the external as a reflection of the internal. Bedil,

the soul towards realization. His ideas echo the thoughts of Martin Lings, whose interpretation of the inner and outer dimensions of religious experience emphasizes that the external forms of practice are necessary for the realization of the internal substance—spiritual awakening and union with the divine. In Hinduism, the interplay between form and substance finds expression in the practice of Bhakti (devotion) and Jnana (knowledge). The many gods and goddesses represented in Hindu rituals are understood



a Persian Sufi poet, explored the idea that the forms of the world are illusions, with the essence of existence lying in the internal realization of the divine. His poetry often invites readers to transcend the forms and seek the deeper truth hidden within. Jami, too, emphasized the mystical union with the divine as a return to the origin of all substance, with the external practices merely guiding the soul to that realization. In the Western philosophical tradition, Aristotle's rejection of Plato's separation between form and substance gave rise to a more integrated view, where form and substance are inseparable. This idea of integration finds its expression in the works of Emily Dickinson, who explored the tension between external appearance and internal truth in her poetry. Her poems, often quiet and intimate, reveal how external actions and words are insufficient to capture the depth of internal experience. Walt Whitman, in contrast, celebrated the connection between form and substance in a more expansive way, particularly through his poetry's exploration of the body and the soul, the material and the spiritual, as mutually constitutive. For Whitman, the form of the body and the substance of the soul are bound together, one enriching the other, in a dance of unity and purpose. Similarly, William Blake in his works like The Marriage of Heaven and Hell explored the relationship between the visible and the invisible, the physical and the spiritual, showing how both are part of a single, dynamic process. In Heidegger's existential philosophy, the duality of form and substance is re-imagined in terms of being and becoming. Heidegger's concept of "being-in-the-world" emphasizes that the essence of existence is found not in abstract concepts but in the lived experience of being. His view echoes the insight found in S.H. Nasr's thought, where the understanding of external forms—whether religious or philosophical—must be grounded in an understanding of the inner reality of being. Nasr's focus on perennial wisdom highlights how forms, whether rituals or sacred symbols, are essential vehicles for realizing deeper, timeless truths about human existence and the divine. In Schuon's work, the idea of form and substance is particularly vital to understanding the relationship between the outer world and the transcendent. Schuon, a scholar of perennialism, argued that the forms found in religious rituals, sacred art, and symbols are reflections of deeper metaphysical realities. He suggested that the external forms serve as conduits to the divine, guiding

as forms that provide access to the ultimate, formless reality of Brahman. Adi Shankaracharya's teachings in Advaita Vedanta present the non-duality of form and substance, where the external world of forms is not illusory but a reflection of the ultimate truth. This understanding is mirrored in the works of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, who emphasized that the forms of worship—whether in temples, rituals, or devotion to the Divine Mother—are vehicles for the realization of the absolute, formless Brahman. The Bhakti poets, such as Mirabai and Kabir, also navigated the tension between form and substance in their poetry. For Kabir, devotion was not confined to rituals alone but was an inner realization that transcended external practices. His poetry called for an experiential understanding of God, one that does not depend on external forms but instead comes from an inner, personal connection. Similarly, Mirabai, in her devotion to Krishna, saw the form of Krishna as a means to access the divine substance, but her poetry reveals a profound internalization of that connection, making her devotion deeply personal and experiential. In Buddhism, especially in Mahayana and Zen traditions, form and substance are understood through the concept of *nyat* (emptiness). Nagarjuna's philosophy of emptiness challenges traditional notions of form and substance, proposing that both are empty of inherent existence. This idea suggests that form and substance, rather than being separate, are interdependent and inseparable. Rilke, in his poetry, mirrors this understanding, exploring the emptiness of form and the infinite potential that lies within the dissolution of fixed identities. His work often reflects the tension between the outer appearance of things and their deeper, hidden meanings, much like the Buddhist concept of emptiness. In Confucianism, external forms of ritual are seen as vital for cultivating the inner substance of moral virtue. Confucius taught that the external forms of *li* (rituals) are necessary to shape a person's character and bring harmony to society. However, these forms must be infused with the inner substance of moral intention, for it is the inner sincerity that gives meaning to external actions. This understanding of form and substance is complemented by the insights of Mencius, who argued that virtue is inherent in human nature, and the role of ritual is to cultivate and manifest that internal goodness. This view can be extended to modern discussions of

identity and authenticity, as seen in the works of Michel Foucault, who explored how external societal structures influence the internal substance of individual identity, often distorting it or guiding it toward conformity. The tension between form and substance in modern secular contexts becomes evident in the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and Michel Foucault, who focused on the tension between external, imposed social structures and internal personal authenticity. Sartre's existential philosophy, particularly his concept of bad faith, explored how individuals may live inauthentically by conforming to external expectations, forsaking the internal, authentic self. Foucault, in his genealogies of power and knowledge, examined how external institutions shape and define the internal realities of individuals. Their work underscores the challenge of reconciling the form (external expectations) with the substance (authentic personal identity), a theme that resonates with the current age of social media and identity politics. The visionary re-understanding of form and substance, as seen in the writings of Blake, Whitman, and Nasr, encourages a holistic view that recognizes the interdependence of both aspects. Rather than viewing form and substance as separate or hierarchical, a comprehensive understanding suggests that forms are not mere reflections of inner truths but essential vehicles through which those truths are realized. This understanding enriches our approach to spiritual practice, philosophical inquiry, and cultural transformation, revealing how the external and internal dimensions of life are dynamically intertwined. Whether through the mystical poetry of Ghalib, the philosophical insights of Nasr, or the existential reflections of Heidegger, the relationship between form and substance remains a profound source of exploration, offering new pathways for understanding human existence, spirituality, and the world around us. The interplay between form and substance invites us into a more holistic understanding of human existence, one that transcends dualities and embraces the interconnectedness of all things. Whether through the philosophical insights of ancient thinkers, the mystical poetry of Sufi saints, or the reflections of modern existentialists, the relationship between form and substance challenges us to align our external actions with our internal truths. It is not enough to merely engage with one aspect of existence; rather, we are called to integrate form and substance, allowing each to inform and elevate the other. In this way, the external world becomes not just a passive reflection but an active participant in our spiritual and intellectual journey. As we come to see, the synergy between form and substance is not only an essential truth of our existence but also a guiding principle in our quest for deeper meaning, enrichment, illumination, connection, and fulfillment. Finally, a visionary re-understanding the profound interplay between form and substance holds the transformative power to dissolve sectarian conflicts and bridge humanity's deep divides. When groups fixate solely on external rituals and symbols, they obscure the deeper, universal truths that unite us all—truths rooted in love, justice, compassion, and shared humanity. By recognizing that rituals are but vehicles leading us to these timeless values, we move beyond superficial differences and embrace the essence that transcends all divisions. This enlightened perspective cultivates a space for mutual respect, unity, tolerance, and empathy, fostering a spirituality that is not only inclusive but profoundly interconnected. In embracing this vision, we dismantle the walls of sectarianism, replacing them with the enduring pillars of peace, understanding, and collective harmony that unite us across all traditions.

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Bima Sakhi Yojana: A New Era of Rural Women Empowerment

PRIYANKA SAURABH

The Prime Minister of India has launched the 'Bima Sakhi' scheme for women from Panipat on 9 December 2024. It is noteworthy that he also launched the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' campaign from Panipat on 22 January 2015. The aim of the Bima Sakhi scheme is to empower women economically through insurance. It promotes women's entrepreneurship and enhances the role of women in economic development across India. The city of Panipat in Haryana is historically important. It is known for its battles and is now the focal point of women's empowerment initiatives in India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Panipat on December 9 and launch the "Bima Sakhi Yojana," which aims to empower women across India. The scheme is expected to benefit lakhs of women. It aims to empower women by creating employment opportunities in the insurance sector. Under the scheme, women will become agents of the Life Insurance Corporation, allowing them to sell insurance and earn income. The initiative is part of broader efforts to promote women's empowerment and economic independence. The "Bima Sakhi Yojana" focuses on the financial security of women, promoting insurance coverage for women. The scheme encourages women's entrepreneurship. It aims to enhance the role of women in economic development. This scheme will provide financial assistance. Women will get access to insurance products, which will also provide training for skill development. This assistance aims to boost women's confidence and independence. This launch is expected to empower women. It will send a strong message about gender equality. This initiative is in line with the national goals for women's rights. It aims to inspire women to take responsibility for their future. 'Bima Sakhi Yojana' will prove to be a milestone in empowering women across India. Women selected under the scheme will work as LIC agents and provide insurance services in their communities. This will not only create employment for women but will also promote financial literacy and security. PM Modi has a deep bond with Haryana, often choos-

ing it as the launching ground for important initiatives. The state's history with Modi's campaigns, including the launch of the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' movement from Panipat in



2015, exemplifies his continued commitment to women's welfare. Known for its focus on women's rights, Haryana will once again play a key role in bringing about social change. This initiative will further strengthen the state's legacy of empowering women. The 'Bima Sakhi Yojana' will add to the state's portfolio of successful women-centric policies and reflect the growing focus on inclusive growth. The government's emphasis on 'Nari Shakti' was strengthened through initiatives such as the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Bill' passed in the Lok Sabha, providing 33% reservation to women. Bima Sakhi Yojana is a progressive initiative launched by the Government of India to empower rural women. It aims to provide employment opportunities to women in the insurance sector. The scheme is in line with the national objectives of promoting gender equality and economic independence

of women. It focuses on enhancing financial inclusion and promoting entrepreneurship among women. The initiative seeks to create sustainable livelihoods by strengthening the



role of women in financial services. The scheme is expected to have a significant impact on rural economies by integrating women into the financial mainstream. Gender Equality: It reinforces the government's commitment to promote gender equality through initiatives like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, and now Bima Sakhi. By providing a stable income and career path, the program seeks to uplift women from vulnerable communities. Effective communication strategies are required to inform eligible women about the scheme. Ensuring timely disbursement of salary and commission is crucial for the success of the scheme. Building a strong support system for women agents to sustain and expand their role in the insurance sector. Applicants should be Indian citizens. Minimum qualification should be 10th or 12th standard. Documents

required include Aadhaar card, PAN card, bank account details, mobile number, and educational certificates, and women should be residents of rural or semi-urban areas. Selected candidates undergo special training provided by Life Insurance Corporation to prepare them as Bima Sakhi. Certification is provided on successful completion of training. A fixed monthly salary: 7,000 in the first year, 6,000 in the second, and 5,000 in the third year, and additional income through commission on insurance policies sold. A dedicated digital platform for monitoring commissions and policy updates. Regular workshops to upgrade skills and knowledge. Initial plan to cover 35,000 women across the country. Panipat, Haryana, is the launchpad for this scheme due to its historic emphasis on women's empowerment. Visit the official or designated government portal. Create an account using personal details and valid contact information. Fill the application form with accurate details. Upload required documents such as ID proof, educational certificates, and bank details. Applications are reviewed. Once approved, candidates get access to a personal dashboard. The 'Bima Sakhi Yojana' continues PM Modi's track record of launching women-centric schemes, following the success of the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' and 'NaMo Didi' programs. His constant effort to empower women is evident in various policies and legislative changes aimed at strengthening the role of women in society and the economy. The Bima Sakhi Yojana is a landmark initiative towards promoting women's empowerment through financial inclusion. By enabling rural women to act as insurance agents, the scheme not only provides them with livelihood opportunities but also integrates them into the formal financial system. The success of the program depends on its effective implementation and continued support from stakeholders.

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Rana lays foundation stone for VTC, playground upgradation at KB Public School

JAMMU: Maintaining that education is top priority of Omar Abdullah led government, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmad Rana, today said that it is our prime concern and responsibility to ensure that every child has access to quality education with enhanced requisite facilities.

“We will move forward by taking along all sections of the society. The inclusiveness, at the heart of our efforts, is going to give a new dimension to the future governance of Jammu and Kashmir. We have to work together to build a strong and united nation,” said Javed Rana, who was speaking during the annual day celebration at Brigadier K B Public Higher Secondary School, Jammu.

Javed Rana, who was the chief guest on the occasion, congratulated the school management and students on the annual celebration of the school saying that quality



education is key to development in any field. The Minister said that an educated person builds a better society and a developed nation and our government is committed to provide an enabling environment for all students to attain quality education.

Commending the efforts of the school's teachers, staff and management, the Minister expressed admiration for their dedication to creating and nurturing an inclusive learning environment. He highlighted the significance of their work in supporting students, particularly those hailing from far-flung areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier, Javid Rana inaugurated Dr Masud A Choudhary Boys Hostel at Khuda Baksh Public Higher Secondary School Jammu. He also laid the foundation stone for the upgradation of the playground and Vocational Training Centre of KB Public Higher Secondary School.

Emphasising that initiatives like these are aimed at enhancing educational infrastructure and providing better opportunities for students, Javed Rana said that the event marked a significant step in promoting holistic education and infrastructure development in the region.

While laying the foundation stone for upgradation of Playground and Vocational Training Centre of K B Public School, Javed Rana said that playgrounds are the best places to develop creativity among the children and the upgradation of playground is a right step in that direction.

Specially -Abled Employees Calls on Minister Sakeena Itoo



Srinagar: A delegation from the Jammu and Kashmir Specially Abled Employees Association met Minister of Social Welfare, School Education, and Higher Education, Sakeena Itoo, at her residence in Church Lane on Monday. According to an official spokesperson of the organisation, the delegation highlighted several challenges faced by specially abled employees and individuals in general. “The primary issue discussed was the implementation of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's decision regarding reservation in promotions for specially abled employees,” he added.

Spokesperson said Minister Sakeena Itoo listened attentively to the concerns raised and assured the delegation that the issue of reservation in promotion for specially abled employees would be addressed promptly.

DC Srinagar stresses on strengthening infrastructure in the Revenue Department

SRINAGAR: With a view to strengthen the infrastructure of Revenue Department in the District, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today chaired a meeting of all Revenue Officers of the District here in his Office Chamber.

At the outset, the DC took a detailed review of Revenue Offices at SDM and Tehsil levels. He was given Tehsil wise appraisal of present Office accommodations.

It was informed that land for construction of the Revenue Complexes and Tehsil Offices has been identified at suitable locations to facilitate general public.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said all possible measures are being taken to further strengthen the infrastructure of Revenue offices in the District besides equipping them with all modern facilities so that people visiting these Offices do not face any inconvenience.

The DC added that purpose of upgrading infrastructure for Revenue Offices is also aimed to enhance overall performance of the Revenue Department in the District and provide a better Office atmosphere for Officials working there.

DIPR holds event on ‘Women Empowerment’

BUDGAM: The Cultural Unit Kashmir of Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) J&K organized a vibrant women empowerment program at Government Model Higher Secondary School (GMHSS) Chadoora. event was attended by the Cultural Officer, Principal GMHSS Chadoora, AECO, faculty members, and enthusiastic students.

During the program, students expressed their thoughts on various dimensions of women's empowerment and brought to light the modern challenges women face in today's society. Their speeches offered valuable insights into the struggles and successes of women, fostering a deeper understanding among peers.

Cultural Officer Burhan Hussain praised the achievements of successful women, emphasizing the importance of role models in inspiring future generations.

Principal, Huma Mir in her welcome address motivated female students to become sources of inspiration for the nation, highlighting the critical role education and empowerment play in shaping the future.

Free Neuro-Psychiatric camp held at remote Aan Freshwar of Budgam

BUDGAM: A day-long free Neuro-Psychiatric Camp was today organized by the District Mental Health Unit, ASYM District Hospital Budgam in collaboration with BMO Khansahib at Aan Freshwar, a remote area of Block Khansahib. Over 121 patients received free consultations, counseling, and medications during the camp.

The logistics support was provided by BMO Khansahib, while Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Budgam provided free medications and transportation, making this camp a resounding success. This camp demonstrates the health department's commitment to providing accessible and comprehensive healthcare services, including mental health care, to the people of Budgam.

Secretary RDD emphasises comprehensive vision document for Lakhpati Didi

JAMMU: Secretary, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj (RDD&PR), Mohammad Aijaz Asad, on Monday chaired a meeting of the steering committee to review implementation of Lakhpati Didi initiative under the Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM).

The flagship program aims to economically empower rural women by ensuring an annual household income of Rs 1 lakh through sustainable livelihood interventions.

The UT of J&K has been assigned a target of supporting 2.33 Lakh potential Lakhpati Didi Households to be transformed into Lakhpati fold over a period of 2 years. A total of 11,936 households have successfully transitioned into the Lakhpati fold till now.

Addressing the meeting, the Secretary emphasised



the need for devising a comprehensive vision document of the Lakhpati Didi initiative to align government schemes with target areas, streamline processes and

ensure efficient delivery.

“We need a complete vision document to streamline our efforts. It should scientifically and comprehensively map Self Help Groups (SHGs) with potential livelihood activities across sectors such as handicrafts, dairy farming and aquaculture. Our aim is to achieve measurable milestones every six months,” maintained the Secretary.

Aijaz Asad highlighted the role of capacity building, proposing the appointment of master trainers to equip SHGs with the necessary skills. He also advocated for a robust dashboard and portal system to track group activities, income generation, and progress.

DDC Budgam reviews status of JJM



BUDGAM: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, Akshay Labroo today conducted review of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the district.

Status was put forth before DDC on the occasion regarding various aspects of the scheme, and progress made in various major and

eligible households receive tap water connections as per the mission's guidelines.

The review meeting also discussed resolution of teething issues being faced during the implementation of the mission.

The DDC directed all concerned officials to address any bottlenecks promptly and ensure the expeditious completion of ongoing projects. He emphasized on the importance of close coordination among all stakeholders to accomplish the mission's targets effectively and within the stipulated timeline. Detailed sub-division wise review was conducted by the DDC on the progress of works.

Week long MDP on Digital Marketing, IPR concludes at IUST

PULWAMA: The one-week Management Development Program (MDP) on Digital Marketing and Intellectual Property Rights concluded today at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Awantipora.



The program was organized by the Branch MSME – Development and Facilitation Office (DFO) Srinagar, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of India, in collaboration with the CIED - IUST Foundation.

A total of 25 participants participated in this comprehensive program.

The primary aim of the MDP was to equip both existing entrepreneurs and aspiring ones with essential knowledge and skills for setting up their enterprises. The program

focused on bridging the gap between technology, business, and legal expertise, with special emphasis on the rapidly evolving fields of digital marketing.

The program was facilitated by experienced trainers who specialize in digital marketing and intellectual property, offering practical insights and real-world applications for participants.

DIPR organizes Road Safety Awareness program at HSS Nagam

BUDGAM: The Cultural Unit Kashmir of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) J&K Monday organized a road safety and traffic awareness program at the Government Boys Higher Secondary School (HSS) Nagam, Chadoora.

The event drew a notable gathering, including dignitaries viz. ARTO Budgam, DySP Traffic Budgam, Cultural Officer Kashmir, District Information Officer Budgam, Principal BHSS Nagam, along with faculty members, students, and senior citizens from the local community.

In his welcome address, Cultural Officer Burhan Hussain underscored the critical importance of road safety,



noting that many accidents stem from inexperienced or reckless driving. He pointed out that the Cultural Unit DIPR is actively engaged in a series of awareness programs throughout the valley, aimed at promoting road safety and reducing the incidence of accidents in the region.

The program featured a presentation by ARTO Budgam, who elaborated on the preventative measures implemented by the Motor Vehicle Department, including details about the issuance of licenses to ensure safer driving practices.

Anti-Corruption Day Observed at Govt College for Women, M. A. Road

Srinagar: Government College for Women, M. A. Road, Srinagar hosted an awareness programme to mark the International Anti-Corruption Day on Monday (December 09).

An official spokesperson said the event was organized by the Anti-Corruption Bureau J&K in collaboration with the NSS and Debating Committee of the host college.

The programme aimed at educating students and faculty about the scourge of corruption and the importance of ethical conduct in the society. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and teachers alike.

Mr. Suhail Rasool, Inspector ACB Srinagar, presented the concept note about the programme followed by a formal welcome address by Principal of the host college, Dr. Yasmeen Farooq. In her address, Dr. Yasmeen emphasized the role of youth in eradicating corruption. “Corruption is a social evil that undermines development and trust. It is imperative for students to lead the fight against it by adhering to integrity and transparency in their lives,” she said. Executive Engineer from ACB, Mr. Aijaz Masood delivered an insightful talk on corruption, highlighting various forms of corruption, its impact on governance and strategies to combat it.

A speech competition was also held on the theme 'Nature and Type of Corruption We See Around Us' in which students of the college participated.



One-day Counselling, Mentorship Seminar held for IAS/JKAS aspirants at Kulgam

KULGAM: The District Employment and Counseling Centre, Kulgam under the aegis of District Administration Kulgam today organised a day long mentorship cum career counselling seminar for civil services aspirants of District Kulgam at Auditorium/Conference Hall of Mini-Secretariat Kulgam.

The theme of the



programme was 'How to Crack IAS/JKAS Examinations.' The seminar was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam,

Athar Amir as the chief guest. Major Abhinandan (CCE Qualifier 2023) attended the seminar as the invited guest speaker.

ITI Shopian holds one day Apprenticeship Mela

SHOPIAN: In a significant effort to empower youth and enhance employment prospects, Industrial Training Institute, Shopian in collaboration with Employment Department Shopian today celebrated one-day apprenticeship Mela.

This unique initiative aims to bridge the gap between aspiring candidates and leading industries through hands-

on training and real-world work experience opportunities.

The mela was attended by employers from diverse sectors viz. tourism & hospitality, Logistics, Software, information technology, manufacturing and artificial intelligence sector.

Superintendent ITI Shopian gave a detailed speech on the scheme and stressed how the scheme

is a win-win situation for both industries and apprentices. He said the scheme is open for all with minimum qualification of 5th up to graduation.

He further said the Mela is a golden opportunity for our youth to gain industry-relevant skills and kick start their careers and earn while learning. During the mela, various companies gave presentations.

Could Your Thyroid Be the Cause of Your Depression?

The idea that thyroid disorders and depression are not always linked comes from proof that when treating the thyroid disorder, the depression does not always improve. In the same respect, not all patients with thyroid disorders suffer from mood changes. Also, the opposite is true. Patients who struggle with mood disorders and depression do not necessarily have abnormal thyroids.

An overview of the thyroid and depression

The thyroid is a gland that releases hormones that control several body functions. These hormones control the heart, breathing, body temperature, and many other bodily functions. Thyroid hormones include Thyroxine (T4), Triiodothyronine (T3), and Calcitonin. If these hormone levels are abnormal, the body's systems won't work properly. This can cause symptoms in some systems alerting to a problem, but there may not be. Symptoms may be so gradual they are not noticed. The body's systems slow down, like in the case of hypothyroidism. Hypothyroidism is defined as a deficiency of thyroid hormone. In areas of adequate iodine uptake such as the United States, the most common cause of hypothyroidism is autoimmune thyroid disease or Hashimoto disease. Hashimoto's disease is more prevalent in women and increases with age. Hyperthyroidism is the opposite situation. The thyroid releases too much hormone into the bloodstream, and the body starts to speed up. This can occur suddenly and the symptoms can begin without warning. Signs and symptoms of hypothyroidism may include fatigue, lethargy or depression. Depression is a common mental health illness that causes daily or nearly everyday feelings of sadness, helplessness, worthlessness, loss of interest, decreased energy, or even suicidal thoughts. Symptoms last longer than two weeks and everyone may not experience all symptoms. Some people may have only a few symptoms, while others may have several. Symptoms can also range from mild to severe. Hypothyroidism is generally diagnosed by a blood test measuring TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone) level. Treatment is thyroid hormone replacement therapy and rarely surgery. It is important to understand that although hypothyroidism may be associated with symptoms of depression, the vast majority of patients with depression do not have clinical evidence of thyroid dysfunction.

Is there a connection between the thyroid and depression?

Over the years, studies have found that symptoms of depression and thyroid disorders are similar. Symptoms of depression often appear in people whose thyroid hormone levels are not at healthy levels. This is particularly true in hypothyroidism. People with hypothyroidism often have symptoms of depression, decreased attention, or slower reactions. People with hyperthyroidism often experience symptoms of anxiety, inability to concentrate, or exaggerated moods.

How does the thyroid affect depression?

The thyroid has a direct effect on mood which can include depression and anxiety. The severity of the depression can vary depending on the severity of the thyroid disorder. The connection between the two comes through the hypothalamic-pituitary-thyroid axis. The hypothalamic-pituitary-thyroid (HPT) axis is a loop that cycles feedback between the hypothalamus and the pituitary gland overseeing thyroid hormone levels. When thyroid hormone levels are high, the HPT axis responds, telling the pituitary gland not to release thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) so that T3 levels can decrease. When thyroid levels are low, the opposite happens. The HPT axis responds by telling the pituitary gland to release more TSH. This prompts the thyroid to increase how much T3 is released. This helps bring the thyroid hormone level to normal.

However, when thyroid levels are abnormal, it throws the loop out of balance. This alters hormone levels throughout the body, affecting mood and other bodily functions. Treatment goals for hypothyroidism include reversing clinical progression and correcting any metabolic abnormalities such as TSH and thyroid hormone levels, specifically free thyroxine (T4).

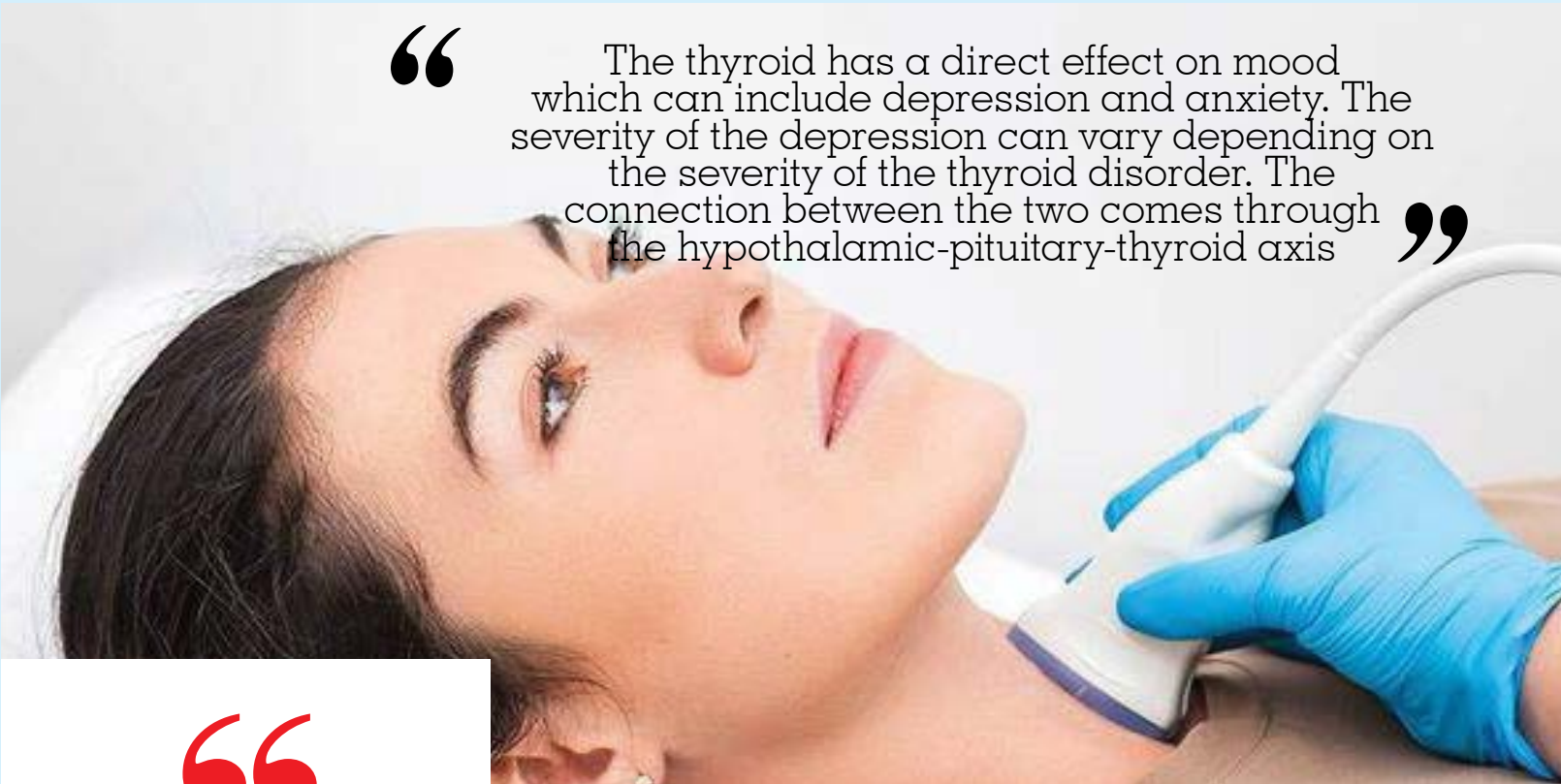
Who might be affected?

Thyroid disorders can affect anyone at any age but are much more likely to affect women between ages 20 and 40. However, as people age, that risk increases. People over age 60 have an increased chance of developing a thyroid disorder. The American Thyroid Association recommends screening at the age of 35 years and then every 5 years thereafter. High-risk patients include pregnant women, patients with type 1 diabetes or

when assessing symptoms of depression and thyroid disorder. This is especially true when symptoms present in someone with both problems.

Is it the thyroid or depression?

Your healthcare provider can help determine if you have symptoms of one, the other, or both. If you have symptoms of a thyroid disorder, your provider will



“The thyroid has a direct effect on mood which can include depression and anxiety. The severity of the depression can vary depending on the severity of the thyroid disorder. The connection between the two comes through the hypothalamic-pituitary-thyroid axis”

“Depression can also occur at any age but is more likely to happen to adults near midlife or older. This is particularly true for adults diagnosed with health problems. Diseases and medications can also impact mood and mental health. These factors increase the risk of depression.”

other autoimmune diseases, or patients who have undergone neck irradiation such as for cancer treatment. Depression can also occur at any age but is more likely to happen to adults near midlife or older. This is particularly true for adults diagnosed with health problems. Diseases and medications can also impact mood and mental health. These factors increase the risk of depression. People with thyroid disorders are more likely to have depression than the general population. Studies show that patients with a known history of hypothyroidism have a greater chance of developing depression during their lifetime.

On the contrary

As research into HPT, thyroid levels, and depression increases, there are more questions about whether the thyroid directly causes depression or if it's more of a coincidence. Some studies suggest that these theories are being debunked. Symptoms of depression and thyroid disorders can be very similar. Some researchers believe they may simply be found together by chance. The idea that thyroid disorders and depression are not always linked comes from proof that when treating the thyroid disorder, the depression does not always improve. In the same respect, not all patients with thyroid disorders suffer from mood changes. Also, the opposite is true. Patients who struggle with mood disorders and depression do not necessarily have abnormal thyroids. While it remains true that there is a link between the two, it is not true in all cases. It is something to look at

complete a physical exam to assess the thyroid to feel for enlargement or nodules. They will order bloodwork to check your T3, T4, and TSH levels. This will provide the best information for diagnosis. If you are suffering from symptoms of depression, be sure to discuss this with your healthcare provider. It will be important to seek appropriate treatment, regardless of the cause. You will want to note whether or not symptoms improve if thyroid treatment is recommended.

How should depression related to the thyroid be treated?

When depression may be related to thyroid disorder, treatment begins with treating the thyroid with replacement therapy. Patients receiving treatment for abnormal thyroid levels notice an improvement in depression symptoms. This isn't always true for the opposite. Patients treated for depression with thyroid medications did not always find improvement. In conclusion, multiple studies have been conducted in recent decades to determine whether depression is related to thyroid disorders. People who have thyroid disorders often report symptoms of depression. Some people also report improvement of symptoms with treatment of thyroid disorder. Some patients with depression even reported improved symptoms after treatment with thyroid medications. But, some recent studies suggest these health issues are simply coincidental.

Breast Milk. Types, Composition, and Benefits

The three types of breast milk

Breast milk composition changes over time, matching the baby's nutritional needs. The composition is also different between term and preterm babies. Colostrum is the first fluid made in the first three days of life. It is produced in small amounts, thick and sticky. Colostrum is lower in fat and higher in proteins compared with mature milk. It is also rich in compounds that support immune health like lactoferrin, white blood cells and secretory IgA. From day five to 14, breast milk is called transitional milk. It is creamier due to its higher content in fat and is also full of nutrients and bioactive ingredients. Mature milk is the milk formed from four weeks onwards. It is rich in macro and micronutrients, hormones, enzymes, growth factors and live cells needed to support the baby's

growth and development.

Mature breast milk composition

Human breast milk contains about 87-88% water, 7% carbohydrates, 1% protein and roughly 3.8% fats. Typically, mature milk contains about 65-70 kcal per 100 mL of energy, with about half of the total caloric energy coming from fats and 40% from carbohydrates. The composition varies depending on the mother's diet, mother's overall health and other factors. Proteins. The most abundant proteins in breast milk are whey and casein. Proteins are essential for the growth, development and proper function of all cells and the body's tissues. Certain proteins also play important roles in fighting infections. For example, whey contains lactoferrin, which can inhibit iron-dependent bacteria and fungi. Another whey protein component called secretory IgA helps protect the baby from viruses and bacteria and may also help prevent allergies. Lactose, also known as milk sugar, is the main source of carbohydrates. Lactose plays an essential role in nutrition and the development of the baby's gut flora. Furthermore, gut flora supports immune system function, digestion,

and brain health.

Fat content varies significantly, with lower amounts found in the full milk lactating breast to higher amounts in the more drained lactating breast. Breast milk contains different fats, including triglycerides, essential fatty acids, linoleic acid and alpha-linolenic acid. The content of omega 3 fatty acids depends on the mother's diet- the milk is richer in omega 3s if the mother consumes more of them in the diet or takes supplements. Fats provide energy for the baby and are important for the development of the brain, eyes, immune system, and growth. Fats also help the baby absorb fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K. The mother's diet highly influences the vitamin content of breast milk. For this reason, healthcare providers recommend a well-balanced nutritious diet and to continue supplementing with prenatal vitamins during lactation. Babies may require vitamin D and K supplements if exclusively breastfed because breast milk may not provide sufficient amounts. Lactating mothers who are vegan or vegetarian need additional supplementation with B vitamins, particularly B6, B12, and folate. Breast milk contains 20 minerals, including iron, copper and zinc, with higher amounts in colostrum. Unlike vitamins,

the content of minerals in the breast milk is not significantly affected by the mother's diet or supplement intake. Iron supplements are not recommended before 4-6 months of age. After six months of age, iron-enriched foods can be introduced into the diet. Breast milk contains various compounds, including hormones like insulin, leptin and ghrelin, which regulate the metabolism and support immune health. Growth factors play key roles in blood vessels, digestive system, brain and hormonal balance development. Among other bodily fluids, breast milk is one of the richest sources of microRNAs. MicroRNAs are biologically active compounds that play essential roles in immune health, growth and development. Breast milk is not sterile. In the past, it was believed that breast milk was sterile. However, research from the last two decades found that milk contains a microbial community, including plenty of friendly bacteria. A recent study identified 820 microbial species, including some strains of Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium, in the human milk microbiota. Scientists are still investigating how these bacteria accumulate in the milk and their role in the baby's health.

SBI Card Crosses 2 Crore Cards in Force Mark

SRINAGAR: SBI Card, India's largest pure-play credit card issuer, has surpassed the 2 crore cards in force milestone, highlighting its commitment to delivering innovative solutions and enhancing customer experiences across the nation. This achievement also underscores SBI Card's pivotal role in transforming India's credit card landscape, and its promise of 'Currency of Digital India'.

Since its inception in 1998, SBI Card has been a pioneer in designing a wide range of products to meet diverse customer needs. From thoughtful core cards, co-branded partnerships with premium brands, to rewards-driven and lifestyle-centric offerings, SBI Card has consistently set new benchmarks for customer-focused innovation in the Indian credit card industry and strengthened its leadership in the market. SBI Card has witnessed strong growth of around 25% CAGR in cards in force,

and 26% CAGR in spends, between FY19 and FY24.

Commenting on the achievement,



Abhijit Chakravorty, MD&CEO, SBI Card, said:

"SBI Card brand is based on the value proposition of 'Make Life Simple'. Crossing the 2 crore cards in force

milestone is a testament to the trust and confidence that our customers place in us. It reflects our relentless focus on

innovation, superior customer service, and our vision of empowering every Indian with convenient, secure, and rewarding payment solutions. We remain committed to delivering unmatched

value to our growing customer base as we continue to address their evolving needs." SBI Card today has a strong customer acquisition network across length and breadth of India, comprising of BANCA and open market. SBI Card offers a diverse portfolio of credit cards, including the exclusive AURUM, a super-premium card, and the feature-rich SBI Card Elite for the premium segment. Credit cards, such as CASHBACK SBI Card, SimplyCLICK SBI Card, SimplySAVE SBI Card, and SBI Card PULSE provide tailored benefits to meet varied customer needs. SBI Card offers co-branded travel cards such as, KrisFlyer SBI Card, Air India Signature SBI Card, BPCL SBI Card, and IRCTC SBI Card cater to globetrotters and travelers. At the same time, retail-focused credit cards, including Titan SBI Card and Reliance SBI Card, offer immense value on lifestyle spends. Today, SBI Card credit cards are available on all key payment networks in the country.

Satish Sharma orders crackdown on over chargers by CSCs

JAMMU, DECEMBER 9: Acting on the directions of Minister for Information Technology, Satish Sharma, the IT Department conducted surprise inspection of various Common Service Centres (CSCs) working in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister has issued strict directions to the concerned authorities to launch crackdown on all the CSCs indulging in overcharging facilitating the common masses.

Pertinently, the J&K administration is enforcing a strict monitoring and regulatory mechanism to ensure that CSCs adhere to notified rates. In this regard, regular audits and inspections are being carried out by dedicated Divisional Level



Inspection teams of IT Department to identify and penalise those engaged in overcharging.

In this regard, Principal Secretary, Information Technology, Santosh Vaidya, has also issued directions to the Deputy Commissioners, who are Chairperson of District e Governance Societies (DeGs),

to ensure strict enforcement of notified rates in their respective districts so that general public does not suffer on this account. A series of surprise inspections of various Common Services Centres (CSCs) were conducted across Jammu and Kashmir to cross check and verify their adherence to government notified rates. The inspection teams, under the supervision of Aijaz Qaiser, Additional Secretary IT Department, were sent to twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch in Jammu division and Baramulla and Kupwara in Kashmir division. During the surprise checks, 15 CSCs of Rajouri and 16 CSCs of Poonch district were inspected in Jammu division while 55 CSCs of Baramulla and 50 CSCs of Kupwara district were inspected in Kashmir division.

Continued From P1...

Govt Allocates

Health & Medical Education, School Education, Higher Education, and Social Welfare, has been allocated the districts of Kupwara, Srinagar, Kathua, and Samba.

Javed Ahmed Rana, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment, and Tribal Affairs, has been allocated the districts of Doda, Rajouri, Pulwama, and Baramulla, Javid Ahmad Dar, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives, and Elections, has been allocated the districts of Ganderbal, Budgam, Kishtwar, and Ramban.

Satish Sharma, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and ARI & Trainings, has been allocated the districts of Reasi, Udhampur, Kulgam, and Bandipora.

Handholding industry

divert even 15% of them to local tourist destinations, we would gain 15 lakh tourists immediately. We have managed the entire tourism economy of Kashmir with just 15 lakh tourists," he remarked.

He stressed the need to showcase Jammu's unique cultural heritage.

"Our Dogra culture-this is treasure unique to Jammu. Our traditions, food, and specialties are unmatched and must be leveraged as key selling points for tourism."

On the resumption of the now-defunct Darbar Move, Omar Abdullah highlighted its positive impact on Jammu's vibrancy.

"The hallmark of Jammu city was the biannual Darbar Move. For six months, people from Srinagar would work here, creating a lively environment. It fostered interaction between people from both sides of the mountains, whether at Wave Mall, Residency Road, or Gole Market. I assure you that we will resume the Darbar Move in the future. Unfortunately, time constraints prevented us from doing so this time," he said.

Discussing the impact of industrial packages, he cautioned against their transient nature. "Industries attracted solely by packages stay only as long as the incentives last. Once the benefits end, they pack up and leave. The industries that endure are those rooted in this land, run by people who are inherently connected to it," he stated.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the challenges related to lease agreements for institutions and businesses.

"Today, schools on leased land are being asked to produce 10-year leases, failing which their registration will not be renewed. Similarly, hotels on leased land cannot even make minor repairs due to the absence of valid leases. These issues need immediate attention," he added.

Omar Abdullah, in his conclusion, assured his government's commitment to addressing industrial concerns.

"Whatever issues you want us to raise with the Finance Minister, please provide me with a detailed note. We will take them up with the Government of India and work toward tangible solutions," he said.

Govt Confirms

government plans to increase the import duty to protect domestic producers.

The reply states that the 70% import duty earlier applied only to imports from the United States as a retaliatory measure. This additional duty was removed following the resolution of certain WTO disputes, it added.

The trade statistics for apple imports provided by the Department of Commerce show fluctuating import values over recent years: 36,237 lakh in 2019-20, 25,998 lakh in 2020-21, 16,153 lakh in 2021-22, 4,117 lakh in 2022-23, and 17,716 lakh in 2023-24. For the period April to September 2024, the import value stood at 17,902 lakh.

J-K's Destiny

efforts of all the members of Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust for promotion of Sanskrit and setting high standards for research on ancient knowledge systems in Jammu Kashmir.

"Destiny of Jammu Kashmir will be decided by its youth and all arms of the government are committed to empower them, to provide support and guidance to realize their dreams. We need to enhance intellectual capacity and enrich the personality of our youth through knowledge and values of courage, compassion, sacrifice and selfless service," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The publication, edited by Mahant Rohit Shastri, President, Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust, features a number of research-oriented articles by renowned Sanskrit scholars and young researchers.

Trustees and members of Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust including RK Chhibber, Prof Sharat Sharma, Nigam Gupta, Sunil Sharma, Vinay Agarwal and Dr Sanjay Sharma were also present.

PDD Proposes

curtailment schedule, the official further added that the department has to provide 24 hours power supply to the essential 250 feeders on which hospitals and other important departments rely on.

"In Kashmir division, more than 50% of feeders' are supplying power to flat-rated areas wherein the power curtailment is almost eight hours. However, in rest of the feeders, the power curtailment depends directly on Aggregate Technical and Commercial losses

(AT&C) losses," the official said.

Regarding the power generation issues, the official said, "From the power plants of the Kashmir region, the local power generation has further decreased from 60 MWs to 40 MWs."

Earlier in the first week of December, KNO has reported that the local DISCOM in Kashmir valley was not getting the same amount of power wherein the consumers could not face distress cuts and unscheduled power cuts.

Against allocated

the officials this time said that they were sure of completion of remaining projects in the city.

A senior official said that as 2025 approaches, the focus is on completing the remaining 19 projects while addressing public concerns. He said that the initiative, which seeks to modernize Srinagar through improved infrastructure and sustainable urban planning, is expected to significantly enhance the quality of life for its residents.

GMC Sgr Students

medical colleges, only 78 seats were effectively available for pure Open Merit candidates this year.

"This has sent waves of despair among deserving students who worked hard to secure high ranks. How can a student with a rank of 90,000 get MD Radiology, while someone with rank 739 is denied a seat in the same branch?" questioned a student representative, as per news agency KNS.

The students also criticized Rule 17, describing it as "draconian and unique to J&K." Under this rule, reserved category candidates securing a seat in OM can upgrade to higher specialties, but the vacated OM seat is reallocated to the reserved category instead of being returned to the OM pool.

"This leads to a double advantage for reserved category candidates and further reduces the number of seats for OM candidates. No other state in India has such a policy," another protesting student told KNS.

The students emphasized the importance of merit in specialty courses like MD/MS, arguing that these fields require high levels of competence to ensure quality healthcare. They highlighted that all MBBS students study under similar conditions, access the same resources, and are assessed equally, making merit-based selection a fair criterion.

Additionally, the students called for the implementation of a bond system for PG and MD courses in J&K, as practiced in other states. They believe this would encourage doctors to serve in underserved areas and address healthcare disparities in the region.

The protesting students have appealed to the J&K administration to restore the OM quota to a fair percentage, abolish Rule 17 to prevent double allocation of seats to reserved categories and implement a mandatory bond system for PG and MD graduates.

These steps, the students argue, will uphold meritocracy and ensure equitable access to medical education, ultimately benefiting the healthcare system.

Will Not Let

property owners, housing the Rohingyas were disconnected and the latter were told to vacate their properties within a month in the Jammu region.

The administration had issued orders to snap the facility to 409 Rohingya families in the Channi Himmat, Sunjuwan and Narwal areas of Jammu.

However, Omar Abdullah led dispensation issued directions to restore the water supply to the Rohingya immigrants.

Omar Abdullah when asked about the issue said that the issue of Rohingya refugees is a humanitarian one. "It is for the central government to decide what to do with them. If they need to be sent back, then send them back. If you can send them, do so. But if you can't, then you cannot let them starve here or let them die of cold. The Government of India must clarify its policy towards them," Omar Abdullah told reporters.

He stressed that until a clear decision is made, the refugees must not be subjected to inhumane conditions. "We did not bring them here or settle them. They were brought and settled here by others. If the central government's policy has changed, then take them wherever you want, but as long as they are here, they must not be treated like animals. They are human beings and must be treated as such," he added.

BJP seeks

deliberate and coordinated effort behind their settlement.

"This is a major conspiracy that warrants a CBI probe. All forces behind this should be exposed and punished," he said, condemning those who supported the settlement on religious grounds.

The BJP leader also raised concerns about the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in facilitating the resettlement of these immigrants, questioning the sources of funding for such groups. "Was the funding sourced domestically or from abroad? The BJP believes the settlement of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis in Jammu, an area close to the international border, was part of a well-thought-out conspiracy," he added.

Sethi further criticized political parties that support the settlement of these refugees, accusing them of hypocrisy. "Ironically, these are the same individuals who opposed the abrogation of Article 370 and claimed that no Indian could settle in Jammu and Kashmir. Yet, they facilitated the settlement of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis in Jammu. Indians residing in other parts of India

cannot settle in Jammu and Kashmir, but these illegal immigrants were allowed to settle here based solely on religion," he said.

ACB Registers

province recording as many as 61 FIRs.

2022 again witnessed a spurt in alleged corruption cases, with the region registering 128 FIRs in different cases. However, 2023 witnessed a decline in such cases, as the region reported only 66 cases, of which Kashmir province reported 45 cases.

2024 has recorded 85 FIRs, with Kashmir province recording registration of 43 FIRs, with Jammu province closely following at 42.

Notably, as the fight against corruption in J&K seems far from over, the data highlights the persistent prevalence of corruption in J&K, particularly in Kashmir province.

Govt Orders Major

of School Education, Kashmir. Gulzar Ahmad Dar, Special Secretary in the Housing and Urban Development Department, has been posted as Special Secretary in the School Education Department. Mussarat-ul-Islam, Managing Director of Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited, has been appointed as Director of Handloom and Handicrafts, Kashmir.

Vikas Gupta, Special Secretary for Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction, has been appointed as Director of Tourism, Jammu. Kanta Devi, Special Secretary in the School Education Department, has been posted as Regional Director, Survey and Land Records (ex-officio Settlement Officer), Jammu.

Syed Qamar Sajad, Additional District Development Commissioner of Baramulla, has been posted as Managing Director of J&K Cable Car Corporation. Khurshid Ahmad Shah, Special Secretary in the Jal Shakti Department, has been appointed

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that i want to change the name of Son in his Aadhar card bearing Registration No 5507 7861 9604, from his old name Mohmmad Ayaan Kothari to New name as Mohmmad Salim Kothari, in this regard any person has any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Concern Authorities with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

Ayaz Ahmad Kothari.
F/O Mohmmad Salim Kothari.
R/O Guzerbal Bandipora.

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از نیابت ارن در دپورہ

عنوان درخواست منتخبان:

محمد رمضان میر ولد غلام احمد میر ساکنہ ارن

در دپورہ بغرض حصول فوٹو تکمیل سرٹیفکیٹ

اشتہار ہمارا آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں کاغذات سائل نسبت حصول سند فوٹو تکمیل سرٹیفکیٹ مزکورہ دفتر پذیرا میں زیر کاروائی ہے۔ سائل کا والد مرحوم غلام احمد میر ولد محمد بھجان میر ساکنہ ارن در دپورہ مورثہ 1979_03_29 کو فوت ہونا تصدیق ہوتا نہیں۔

اگر اس بارے میں کسی کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو سات دن کے اندر یوم دفتر پذیرا میں اپنا اعتراض پیش کریں۔ معیار گذر کرنے کے بعد کوئی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار ارن در دپورہ

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that in my Driving licence bearing Registration No JK-15 20120006764, my name has been Wrongly mentioned as Javid Iqbal Khan, while as my Actual and correct name is Javeed Iqbal Khan, Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person has any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Assistant Regional Transport Office Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

Javeed Iqbal Khan.
S/O Mohammad Muzaffar khan.
R/O Phalwanpora Panjigam Bandipora.

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that in my Driving licence bearing Registration No JK-15 20150009552, my Parentage has been Wrongly mentioned as Mohamad Maqbool Dar, while as my Actual and correct Parantege is Muhammad Maqbool Dar, Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person has any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Assistant Regional Transport Office Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

Humayun Maqbool.
S/O Muhammad Maqbool Dar.
R/O kosum Bagh Hakabara Bandipora.

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that the Residence of my Son has been Wrongly mentioned in his school records as Sumlar Gojjar pati, while as his Actual and correct Residence is Kootasathri Sumlar Shok baba Bandipora, Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person has any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Principal Shokbaba Institute of Education Sumlar Bandipora, and Headmaster GOVT High school Kootasathri Sumlar Shok baba Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

Shakeel Ahmad Gojar Sheikh.
F/O Saleem Ahmad Gojar Sheikh.
R/O Kootasathri Sumlar Shok baba Bandipora.

Stokes lauds England's 'more dominant cricket' for series win in NZ

Ben Stokes has credited England's "more dominant cricket" for securing their first series win in New Zealand since 2008, with Black Caps captain Tom



Latham ceding his side were unable to cope with the pressure they were put under by after winning the opener at Hagley Oval by eight wickets.

the tourists. England needed just three days to secure a 2-0 lead in the three-match series, rounding out a thrashing of 323 runs at the Basin Reserve on Sunday afternoon. It comes a week

England arrived on day three on 378 for 5 in their second innings, already leading by 533. Joe Root's 36th Test hundred eventually set New Zealand an improbable 583. They were bowled out for 259.

The bulk of the work had been done on day one. England battled seaming conditions by sprinting to 280 all out inside 55 overs thanks to a remarkable 123 from Player-of-the-Match Harry Brook. They then channeled those same conditions to dismiss New Zealand for 125 in their first innings, with Brydon Carse's 4 for 46 and Gus Atkinson's 4 for 31 (including a hat-trick to finish the innings) leading the charge.

Stokes asserted it was England's aggressive nature that allowed them to boss this match, and the series so far, particularly when up against it. Here, they were 43 for 4 before making it to 280. It was reminiscent of the first Test, when they rallied from 71 for 4 to make 499 - courtesy another Brook century - after New Zealand had posted 348.

"To play the more dominant cricket over the days we have played so far," answered Stokes when asked how this first away win in New Zealand for 16 years had been achieved.

"In this Test in particular, on day one we were 43 for 4 to be here on the winning side on day three is quite phenomenal. We got bowled out in fifty overs (54.5) but we had 270 runs on the board which was a good score on that day one-wicket, and then we obviously had time left with the ball to be able to make some inroads. To score 270 and take five wickets at the end of day one (New Zealand closed on 86 for 5) really set this game up."

"We back ourselves to be able to go out there and change games and we feel that there needs to be a bit of impetus put into the game, particularly with the bat.

"As a bowler you want to be able to plonk it on a length and plonk it onto the top of off stump over and over again. But sometimes when a batter is brave enough to take you on and knock you off your length, it's very hard to commit to still doing that."

Latham begrudgingly agreed with the sentiment. Though New Zealand knew what to expect - this was their seventh meeting and sixth defeat against England in the Bazball era. They were unable to halt the tourists' - especially Brook's - intent.

"It's the pressure they are able to put you under, especially with the bat. I think on day one it was offering enough for our bowlers and the way Harry played in that innings was outstanding.

"Credit where it's due. The way he played puts you under pressure from ball one. He played some incredible shots that you don't necessarily see from other teams around the world."

Meanwhile, Stokes was unwilling to be drawn on whether Jacob Bethell has emerged as a challenger to Ollie Pope's regular position at No.3.

Following Jordan Cox's broken finger, sustained on the final morning of England's warm-up match in Queenstown, the decision was made to move Pope to six to allow him to keep wicket, with Bethell, the spare batter, brought in at first drop.

Shastri, Gavaskar urge 'subdued' Rohit to return to opener's role

ADELAIDE: Former India players Ravi Shastri and Sunil Gavaskar want skipper Rohit Sharma to return to the opening spot so that he can be his aggressive and expressive self.

Rohit, who had missed the first Test, dropped down to the number six spot in the pink ball Test after KL Rahul excelled at the top in the series opener in his absence.

However, the Indian skipper looked "too subdued" as he managed scores of 3 and 6 in India's 10-wicket loss here.

"That's the reason I want him at the top. That's where he can



be aggressive and expressive. Just thought he was a little too subdued, just seeing his body language," Shastri told 'Star Sports'.

"The fact that he didn't make runs, I don't think there was enough on the field there. I just wanted to see him more involved, and a little more animated," the former India coach added.

Ahead of the Adelaide Test, Rohit stated that he didn't wish to tinker with a combination that brought the team success in the series opener which the visitors won by 295-run win at Perth. He even batted in the middle order in the warm up game in Canberra.

However, Rohit did admit it was not an easy decision for him to take personally.

"Personally, it was not easy. But for the team, yes, it made a lot of sense," Rohit, batted in the middle order for the first time since 2018, had said.

Rahul, who had looked solid with scores of 26 and 77 while sharing a 201-run partnership with fellow opener and centurion Yashasvi Jaiswal in the second innings of the first Test, failed to replicate his form in the second match.

Rahul's failure to capitalise on the opportunity has prompted former India captain Gavaskar to call for Rohit's return to his opening slot.

"He should return to his regular spot. We should remember why Rahul had opened. He did that because Rohit Sharma was not available for the first Test," Gavaskar said on 'Sports Tak'.

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Cluster University Football Tourney concludes

SRINAGAR: The Inter-College Football Tournament, organised by Cluster University Srinagar in collaboration with Indian Army (31 Sub Area, Chinara Corps), concluded on Monday with Govt. College for Women, M.A. Road winning the girls' title and Amar Singh College clinching the boys' title.

Sixteen teams from eight constituent colleges of Cluster University Srinagar participated in the tournament which began on November 28. Amar Singh College lifted the boys' trophy after defeating Govt. College for Women, M. A. Road with a 3-0 margin. In the girls' category, the final match was played between 'Team A' and 'Team B' of Govt. College for Women, M. A. Road in which the former secured the win with a thumping 8-0 margin.

The award and prize distribution ceremony was presided over by Vice Chancellor, Cluster University Srinagar, Prof. Mohammad Mobin and General Officer Commanding (31 sub-area), Major General P. B. S. Lamba.

Haider of Amar Singh College was adjudged as 'Best Player' of the tournament in the boys' category while Fahima Qureshi of Govt. College for Women, M. A. Road was adjudged as the Best Player in the girls' category.

Usman Peer of Amar Singh College was adjudged as 'Best Goalkeeper' of the tournament in boys' category and Labaik Sajad of Govt. College for Women, M. A. Road was adjudged as 'Best Goalkeeper' in the girls' category. The match officials were also facilitated on the occasion.

Vice Chancellor, Prof. Mobin reiterated the university's commitment to provide world class facilities to hone the sporting talent of students. Maj Gen PBS Lamba also commended the students for their enthusiasm and reaffirmed Army's support for such events.

Others present on the occasion included Dean Academics Affairs, Prof. Yasmeen Ashai, Registrar, Dr. Syed Wilayat Hussain Rizvi, Controller of Examinations, Dr. Khurshid Ahmad Mir, Nodal Principal, Prof. Seema Naz, Sports Secretary, Dr. Munir Ahmad Mir besides Deans of various schools and Principals of constituent and affiliated colleges.

Real Kashmir, Inter Kashi play out 1-1 draw in I-League clash

SRINAGAR: In a highly competitive I-League encounter at the TRC Ground in Srinagar on Monday, Real Kashmir FC and Inter Kashi ended their match in a 1-1 draw, maintaining their unbeaten streaks.

Both teams now have eight points each from four games, with two wins and two draws, occupying the top two spots on the league table.

In Monday's match, Real Kashmir's midfielder Lalramsanga opened the scoring in the 8th minute with a perfectly timed header off a corner. The Snow Leopards dominated early exchanges, putting Inter Kashi on the back foot.

Inter Kashi, led by their Spanish striker Domingo Berlanga, found their rhythm in the second half. Berlanga equalized in the 69th minute with a composed finish off an aerial through ball, salvaging a point for the visitors.

Both teams had chances to take the lead late in the game. Inter Kashi's goalkeeper Arindam Bhattacharya denied Shahid Nazir's top-corner attempt, while Real Kashmir's Mohd Arbaz made a crucial save against Joni Kauko in the 86th minute.

RKFC is the only club from J&K participating in the I League and is owned by Arshad Shawl.

This was RKFC's last home match of the year, now the team will head to Bhaini Sahib to face Namdhari on December 15.